

NEW BEES AND WASPS—PART VI

An Undescribed *Paracolletes* from the Victorian Alps

By TARTLTON RAYMENT, F.R.Z.S., Melbourne

Paracolletes stewarti sp. nov. (Fam. Colletidae)

TYPE: Male—Length, 9.5 mm. approx. Black. (Female, 12.5 mm.)

Head transverse, shining; face with long loose ochreous hair, which is black at sides (all black on some specimens); clypeus shining, with scattered large punctures and smoky hair; supra-clypeal area rising to a fine carina; vertex with long black loose hair; compound eyes dark-claret, converging slightly below; genae with a few long white hairs; labrum and mandibulae black, the latter long and slender; antennae entirely black, submoniliform.

ALLOTYPE: Female—*Head* almost circular from the front; face with much long white plumose hair; on the vertex a few black hairs are intermixed; clypeus convex, coarsely punctured, the polished supra-clypeal area rising to a fine carina; compound eyes converging below; antennae black, the flagellum obscurely brownish beneath; mandibulae polished black.

Prothorax black, with light-smoky hair; tubercles with a fringe of drab-white hair; *mesothorax* polished, with long loose black hair, with punctures of medium size round the margin, but an impunctate area in middle; scutellum similar, with a median sulcus; postscutellum dull, but with much black hair; metathorax with a scale-like sculpture over an area shaped like a Moorish arch; much long ochreous hair laterally; abdominal dorsal segments polished, with a silky obscure-purple sheen, a few white hairs laterally, but much black hair apically [the female has a large apical red plate as in *Anthophora* (Rayment, 1942) females] ventral segments polished, pale margins, a few white hairs.

Legs entirely black, with white hair (much long black plumose hair on tibiae of female); tarsi dark-amber, with fulvous hair; claws reddish; hind calcar reddish-amber [conspicuously long-pectinate in female]; tegulae polished black; wings hyaline; nervures sepia; cells: the second cubital forming a trapezium, receiving the first recurrent nervure at its middle; pterostigma paler sepia and large; hamuli about eight, strong.

Locality—Mount Buffalo, Victoria, January 9, 1947.

TYPE and ALLOTYPE in the collection of the author.

Allies: *P. leaf* Ckll., which has oblique striae on the enclosed area of the metathorax, and some red on the mandibles and flagellum, fifth tergite entirely greenish.

Note by collector (Mr. H. C. E. Stewart), to whom the new species is dedicated:

The first specimen of this species was obtained from a flower of the

Yam near Lake Catani, but unfortunately the insect's head was broken off and lost in the post; a series was collected near View Point, and one bee was captured not far from the Chalet.

A few days later more specimens were caught near the hut at the foot of the Hump, at approx. 5,000 feet altitude, by Miss E. Colline Chugg, who observed many females burrowing into the granitic soil. There was a number of holes, at which the bees maintained a busy traffic to and fro, while numbers of males hovered over the mound.

BEEES FROM THE VICTORIAN ALPS

By TARTLTON RAYMENT, F.R.Z.S., Melbourne

A collection of bees taken by Hugh C. E. Stewart, at Mount Buffalo, during the last week of December, 1946, and the first week in January, 1947, yielded more individuals and a few more species than he obtained on any of his previous visits to the highlands of the State. It would appear that the Victorian Alps are richer in APIDAE than has been hitherto expected. Systematic observation and collection should yield more surprises, for often the heavy falls of snow at that altitude persist for several months.

Several good series were also taken by a youthful member of the F.N.C.V. party, E. Colline Chugg, during the second week. This young naturalist of fifteen years is to be congratulated, not only on her zeal in collecting, but also on her careful mounting and neat labelling of the specimens, which simplified my study of them very considerably.

That the bees of Mount Buffalo (5,000-odd feet), in Victoria, should approach those of the island of Tasmania, 100-200 miles farther south, should occasion no surprise, for the altitude offsets the difference in latitude, so that the ecology is not dissimilar.

At the time of this visit, the flora was in all its glory. While alpine conditions are responsible for high specialization in the flora, yet the bees of the Mount are but little different from specimens taken along the lower areas of the littoral zone.

On the other hand, the honey-gatherers of the great arid centre of Australia are characteristic of that region, and it would appear that heat, as a factor in the evolution of bees, is of more importance than cold.

The forty or so specimens (including Miss Chugg's), among which is a new species, have been determined by me as follows:

Family HYLAEIDAE

Hylaeus eugeniellus Ckll.

One female, larger than the type, and minus the light stripe on the prothorax and the cream-coloured hind tarsi.

On flowers of the Alpine Daisy, *Brachycome cardiocarpa*, var. *alpina*.